GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5418
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2001
LEPROSY
GANTA SRINIVASA RAO

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether recent Indo-British study funds that susceptibility to leprosy could be genetically linked prove to the disease;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed by the Government to meet the situation?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b) : In a study report published in UK based Journal Nature (Genetics) Vol. 27, 2001 page 439-441, it has been indicated that a genetic linkage has been observed on 10 P13 of the human genome on 224 families mainly from Vizag in Andhra Pradesh and Kumbhakonam in Tamil Nadu consisting of 245 independent affected sibpairs with Paucibacillary type of leprosy. It is already will known that there is greater risk of contracting the infection among people living in close contacts. This study result does not differentiate whether it is due to close contact or by genetic susceptibility.

(c) The National Leprosy Elimination Programme (NLEP) is covering all districts of the country for providing free MDT services. Intensive Care Detection Drive is also undertaken in the States to detect the leprosy patients early and put them on Multi Drug Therapy (MDT).The risk of contracting infection in close contact will be negligible once a patient is given MDT. The potent MDT regimen reduces the load of infection remarkably in the patients soon after treatment. It is indicated by WHO that single dose of Rifampicin along k9ills 99.9% of the bacilli.